

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 03421 120832Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8289
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 3421

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SA, SY, PK, US
SUBJ: KING KHALID COMMENTS TO AMBASSADOR ON PRESIDENT ASAD;
PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO

1. DURING PALACE RECEPTION MAY 10 IN WHICH KING KHALID RECEIVED
DIPLOMATIC CORPS, SIX AMBASSADORS INCLUDING MYSELF WERE INVITED
TO VISIT WITH HIM PRIVATELY FOR A FEW MINUTES EACH. OTHERS WERE
IRANIAN, AUSTRALIAN, PAKISTANI, BRAZILIAN, AND LEBANESE.

2. AFTER EXCHANGE OF AMENITIES DURING WHICH I EXPRESSED PRESIDENT
CARTER'S SATISFACTION AT HM'S SAFE RETURN HOME IN GOOD HEALTH,
KING ASKED ME WHETHER THE PRESIDENT HAD RETURNED TO THE UNITED
STATES. I SAID I THOUGHT HE WAS ABOUT TO DO THAT. HE THEN ASKED
WHAT WENT ON DURING THE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND
MR ASAD. I SAID I DIDN'T HAVE DETAILS BUT IT WAS CONSIDERED TO BE
A VALUABLE MEETING. HE THEN SAID ASAD IS A GOOD MAN. I NODDED,
ADDING THAT HE IS ALSO A STRONG ONE. ASAD IS VERY NECESSARY FOR THE
ENTIRE ARAB CAUSE, THE KING SAID.

3. KING KHALID THEN TURNED TO ANOTHER SUBJECT, SAYING THAT US
GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO SOMETHING TO HELP BHUTTO. NOT KNOWING WHAT
HE HAD IN MIND, I COMMENTED THAT WE HAVE BEEN HELPING THE PAKISTANI
PEOPLE FOR A LONG TIME AND EXPRESSED HOPE WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.
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HM THEN ASKED WHAT WE WOULD HAVE IN PAKISTAN IF BHUTTO GOES UNDER.
WE WOULD HAVE NOTHING THERE IF THAT HAPPENS, HE COMMENTED. I SAID IT
SEEMED THAT HE HAD SOME DOMESTIC PROBLEMS WHICH ONLY THE
PAKISTANIS COULD SETTLE. THE KING THEN REPEATED HIS BELIEF THAT THE
US GOVERNMENT "SHOULD HELP" BHUTTO. I SAID I WOULD CERTAINLY
PASS HIS MAJESTY'S OPINION TO MY GOVERNMENT. REST OF CONVERSATION
WAS PERSONAL IN NATURE TURNING AROUND MY IMPENDING DEPARTURE.

4. I THEN TOOK A SEAT NEXT TO DR PHARAON, A ROYAL COUNSELOR, WHO REMARKED THAT THE KING SEEMED ANIMATED DURING OUR CONVERSATION. I SAID HM IS CONCERNED ABOUT BHUTTO'S PROBLEMS. DR PHARAON WAS AMUSED.

5. THE KING THEN CALLED FORWARD THE PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR, FROM WHOM I LEARNED LATER HM DISCLOSED THAT PART OF OUR CONVERSATION PERTAINING TO BHUTTO. I COMMENTED TO THE PAKISTANI THAT IT WAS NOT QUITE CLEAR TO ME WHETHER HM WAS REFERRING TO HELP IN CONNECTION WITH PAKISTAN'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS OR PERHAPS PROBLEMS OF A DIFFERENT NATURE. PAKISTANI SAID KING WAS NOT CLEAR IN SPEAKING TO HIM EITHER, BUT HM DID STATE THAT HE HAD ASKED ME TO REQUEST MY GOVERNMENT TO HELP MR BHUTTO.

6. THIS EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE DURING THE AFTERNOON. KING KHALID WAS THEN APPARENTLY RESTED AND WHILE SHOWING EFFECTS OF HIS RECENT SOJOURN IN ENGLAND, HE WAS QUITE LIVELY. BY THE END OF THE EVENING FESTIVITIES IN DOWNTOWN JIDDA, HOWEVER, WHICH KING ALSO ATTENDED, HE WAS SHOWING SIGNS OF CONSIDERABLE FATIGUE. THEY HAVE BEEN PUTTING HIM THROUGH WELCOME-HOME PROGRAMS IN VARIOUS CITIES WHICH HOPEFULLY WILL END TOMORROW AT MEDINA WITHOUT CAUSING HIS MAJESTY TO HAVE A RELAPSE.

7. SUGGEST YOU BRIEF MY SUCCESSOR ON BHUTTO. HM IS QUITE CAPABLE OF RAISING SUBJECT DURING PRESENTATION CEREMONY.
PORTER

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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